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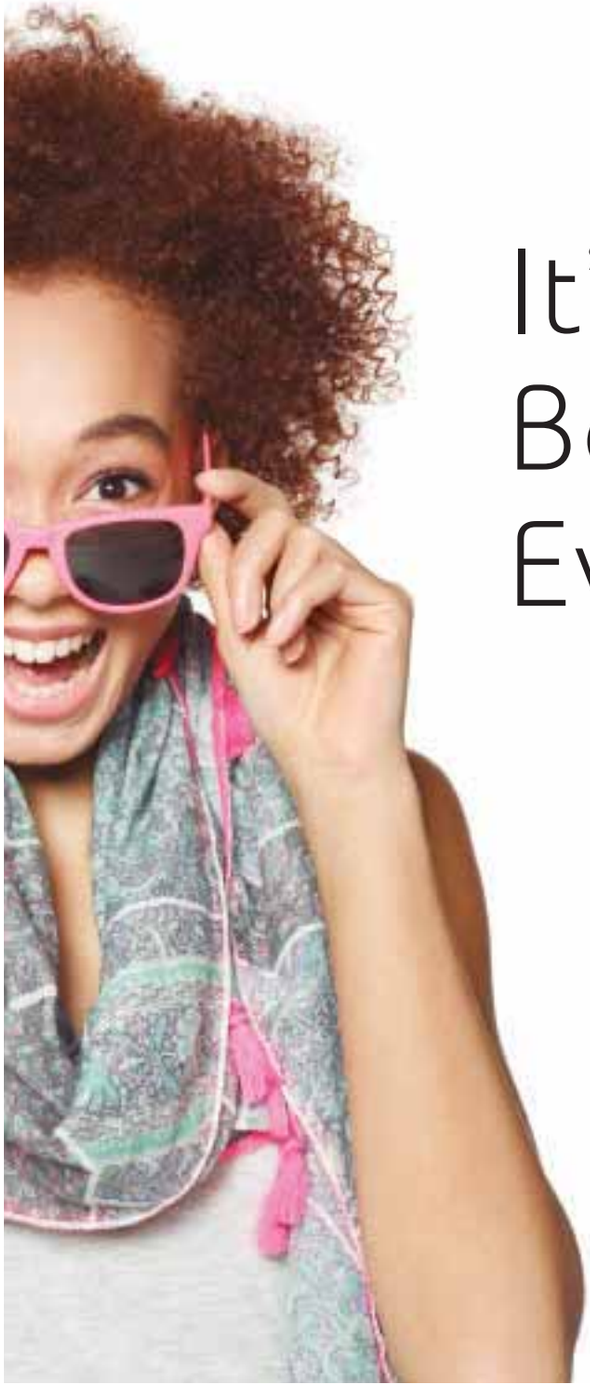

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OUTRAGE

WORLD REELS IN SHOCK AS HEARTBREAKING IMAGES EMERGE OF HUNDREDS OF VICTIMS, MANY OF THEM CHILDREN, OF AN APPARENT NERVE-GAS ATTACK IN SYRIA PAGE 4

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SHOWING OFF HIS SKILLS

Mike Shiplack, director of the Regina Disc Golf Association, shows off his "putting skills" at Douglas Park on Wednesday. The association is holding its first-ever tournament at the end of the month. **Story, page 3.** ALYSSA MCDONALD/METRO

Fee will inflate home prices: Builders' group

Real estate. Regina and Region Home Builders' Association is warning that a proposed servicing fee increase will raise costs of homes

MARCO VIGLIOTTI
marco.vigliotti@metronews.ca

A proposed 9.2 per cent increase in the servicing fees the city charges developers will be passed on to Regina home buyers and further inflate already rising housing prices, the president of a local builders' association says.

"In the process of moving projects forward, there's a lot of small components that add costs to housing — and some of them, the municipal government is in control of," Stu Niebergall, president and CEO of the Regina and Region Home Builders' Association, told Metro of the fees.

Like most municipalities, the City of Regina requires developers of new subdivisions to pay for additional infrastructure required for these communities.

Determined by a complex formula, the city's servicing fees cover costs of sewers, sidewalks and other necessary infrastructure.

The city conducts a review of the fees every two years. And the reviews, said Mayor Michael Fougere, include consultations with the Home Builders' Association.

However, the proposed increase has yet to be finalized.

"(The rate increase) will go to council in September," Fougere said. "We will debate that and either pass or amend it."

Though the increase might drive up the home prices in such new developments, Fougere said the fees reflect the city's desire to have "new growth pay for new growth."

"The infrastructure, the sidewalks, the pipe up the ground, the parks are all paid for by new development," he said of the intent behind the rates.

The mayor added that the city makes contributions to certain infrastructure projects necessary for new developments.

"We will pay for some of the major streets going in to the subdivisions," he said. "We make contributions to infrastructure."

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Tatiana Maslany

Local actress to go on Parks and Rec

The shine keeps getting brighter for Regina-born actress Tatiana Maslany.

The 27-year-old, who rose into Hollywood's eye for her multi-character role in Space Channel's Orphan Black, is joining the cast of NBC's Parks and Recreation for a two-episode stint.

Maslany — who was once a part of Regina's General Fools improv comedy troupe — will be in the fifth and sixth episode of the sixth season of the comedy show as a love interest for character Tom Haverford.

Already this year, Maslany has won a Television Critics Association Award for her performance in Orphan Black, and the lack of an Emmy nomination for the role was called a snub. METRO

Dubbing structures

Head of naming review named

The Saskatchewan government has appointed former lieutenant-governor Gordon Barnhart to head a review of the way names are selected for provincially owned buildings and geographic "features."

The province said Tuesday that the review would look to "modernize" the current naming policy and should be submitted to cabinet by Dec. 31.

Premier Brad Wall said he supports scrapping a provision that prohibits naming buildings after people who are still alive.

"They should be able to enjoy the honour if the province decides to name something for someone because of what they contributed," he said. MARCO VIGLIOTTI/METRO

$17.5B so far in 2013

Exports on track for another record

Provincial exports increased by 4.3 per cent in the first half of 2013, putting Saskatchewan on pace to surpass its yearly export record set last year, the government said Tuesday.

The province has sold $17.5 billion so far.

MARCO VIGLIOTTI/METRO

Sally Ann in need of school supplies for needy students

Requests skyrocket.
No longer enough to go around as more people start using the program

ALYSSA MCDONALD
alyssa.mcdonald@metronews.ca

The Salvation Army is desperate for school-supply donations following a substantial increase in children in need as they prepare to head back to classes.

The non-profit organization said on Wednesday it has received 306 requests for essential supplies — up 121 students from the previous year.

According to Val Wiks, a community ministries worker at the Salvation Army, the number of high-school students in need has more than doubled from 30 to 64. The number of pre-kindergarten kids seeking supplies is up from two to 17.

"Part of it is public awareness.... The people were probably in need before but weren't aware that there were programs going on," said Wik.

"It also gets harder every year to send kids back to school because the cost of school supplies goes up and the cost of school fees go up and the requirements are different."

They have only enough backpacks for 70 students and supplies for about 150 students to hand out next Monday before school starts.

"We will be able to give a bare supply list. By that, I mean they will get crayons or markers or pencil crayons," Wik said. "But some of the school lists ask for all three.... This year, we will only be able to give out one of the three."

The organization has been taking requests for school supplies since Aug. 12 and is still accepting registrations, despite planning to distribute the items after Monday.

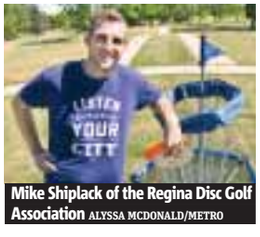
Help solve the problem

Donations needed include backpacks, notebooks, pencils, pens, markers, highlighters, glue sticks, math sets, memory sticks, looseleaf paper, rulers, scissors, report covers and binders — or money to buy them.

- Donations can be dropped off at thrift-store outlets — 836 Albert St. or 1711 Dewdney Ave. E — or at the Salvation Army office at 2240-13th Ave.

Val Wiks, a community ministries worker at the Salvation Army in Regina, shows off the kinds of school supplies given to children in need. ALYSSA MCDONALD/METRO

Disc golf taking off in Douglas Park



Mike Shiplack of the Regina Disc Golf Association ALYSSA MCDONALD/METRO

The goal of disc golf is still a hole-in-one, but players use a very different method to get to the green.

Players use three kinds of Frisbee-like discs — a driver, a mid-range and a putter — to reach the above-ground holes called baskets, usually in hopes of beating the course par.

"It's just a walk through the park and an excuse to get out and explore," Mike Shiplack, director of the Regina Disc Golf Association (RDGA), said on Wednesday while demonstrating the sport at Douglas Park.

Amid growing interest from locals, the association is holding its first 18-hole tournament on Aug. 31 at Douglas Park.

"Although it's not a very popular sport en masse, it does have its followers — so we are hoping to draw people in from Saskatoon," said Shiplack.

Many of the RDGA's 100 members have been playing for years, though several have had to travel to other cities — from Saskatoon all the way to Kelowna, B.C. — to use permanent courses.

Teaming with the Wascana Centre Authority, the RDGA — which was created earlier this year — is planning to build a permanent 18-hole course by next spring at Douglas Park.

They have about half of the $13,000 to $15,000 they need. Once it's constructed, it would be open to everyone in the community. ALYSSA MCDONALD/METRO

New hope in Cairo. Envoy says detained Canadians could be freed early

Two Canadians detained in Cairo remained behind bars Wednesday as an uneasy calm allowed the reopening of the Canadian embassy in the Egyptian capital.

Egypt's ambassador to Canada said Tarek Loubani and John Greyson could conceivably be freed before the end of the 15-day period that prosecutors said they were ordered detained.

"Technically it is possible, because these are maximum (detention) times allowed by the law," said ambassador Wael Aboulmagd.

"I think the first period will be four days, and then ... the prosecutor decides if he needs more time."

Aboulmagd stressed, however, that under Egypt's judicial system, he could not interfere in the process, and it would be entirely up to prosecutors to decide whether to release the men.

Loubani, a doctor from London, Ont., and Greyson, a Toronto filmmaker, were detained Friday by Egyptian police.

Friends and family say they were in Cairo after making an unsuccessful attempt to enter Gaza, where Loubani teaches emergency medicine and Greyson was exploring the prospects of making a documentary.

Canadian consular officials were expected to meet with the two men Thursday.

The public prosecutor's office in Cairo says the men face a range of accusations, including threatening security and social peace and possessing ammunition and explosives.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Flood of support

600

The Egyptian embassy in Ottawa has received more than 600 emails and phone calls from supporters of the two Canadians since their detention in Cairo.

Road rage. Chinese bus driver takes the angry route, plows into a crowd

A Chinese bus driver angry over being punished by his company drove a bus into a pack of bicyclists and motorcyclists on Wednesday.

Twenty-seven people were injured, reports said.

The bus driver — identified only by his surname Li — previously had been fined about $32 by his company for exceeding the speed limit and put on leave after he refused to write a self-criticism letter.

So the upset driver took an empty bus, which he plowed into people in the southern Chinese city of Shunde in Guangdong province.

Xinhua said Li slammed into one motorbike, 10 mopeds and five bicycles. Of the injured, two were in serious condition.

Li was detained by police on charges of endangering public safety.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Gunmen strike

Drive-by attack kills politician

Gunmen shot and killed a Swedish politician and wounded another in a drive-by shooting Wednesday in Mogadishu, said police in Somalia.

Killed was Abdirahim Hassan, 24, a member of the youth wing of Sweden's Left Party. Ann-Margarethe Livh, a group leader for the Left Party, was injured.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Expenses fracas

Wallin gets her bill: $138, 970

Sen. Pamela Wallin's final bill is in.

The embattled senator has been ordered to pay back $138,970.

Wallin was already on the hook for $121,348 after an independent audit of her travel expenses.

She has already paid back $38,000, and has promised to repay the rest once ordered to.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Citizen journalism: This photo from a usually reliable source is said to show the tragic aftermath of a purported toxic gas attack in Damascus, Syria. A woman is supported as she mourns over the bodies of children on Wednesday. LOCAL COMMITTEE OF ARBEEN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Children die in gas attack: Activists

Alleged atrocity. Syrian activists claim 100 died in toxic attack in Damascus — a report that has shocked the world

Anti-government activists Wednesday accused the Syrian regime of carrying out a toxic gas attack that killed at least 100 people, including many children as they slept.

The purported attack happened during artillery and rocket barrages on the eastern suburbs of Damascus.

Shocking images emerged, showing pale, lifeless bodies of children lined up on floors of makeshift hospitals and others with oxygen masks on their faces as they were attended to by paramedics.

One appeared to be a toddler clad in diapers.

An activist said bodies of 63 of the dead had indications of a chemical weapons attack but he could not confirm this.

"Their mouths were foaming, their pupils were constricted, and those who were brought in while still alive could not draw their breaths and died subsequently," he said.

The Syrian regime called claims of the attack "absolutely baseless." Syria's ally, Russia, described the reports as "alarmist."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Quoted

"Such an attack is completely unacceptable and we call on the ... regime to co-operate with the UN officials investigating these disturbing reports."

Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird, who says Ottawa will continue to monitor the situation in Syria closely

UN chief 'shocked'

United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said he is determined to ensure a "thorough investigation" into the reports of a deadly toxic gas attack by the Syrian regime.

UN deputy spokesperson Eduardo del Buey said the secretary-general is "shocked" at Wednesday's alleged use of chemical weapons in the eastern suburbs of Damascus.

But President Bashar Assad's regime denied using chemical weapons.

However, a letter drafted by Britain and France has been sent to the secretary-general requesting that the team launch "an urgent investigation ... as expeditiously as possible."

More than half a dozen other countries — including the United States, Australia, Luxembourg and Germany — also signed the two nations' letter.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

His message is clear: A Syrian man who lives in Beirut holds up a placard during a Beirut protest over the alleged toxic gas attack in Damascus. HUSSEIN MALLA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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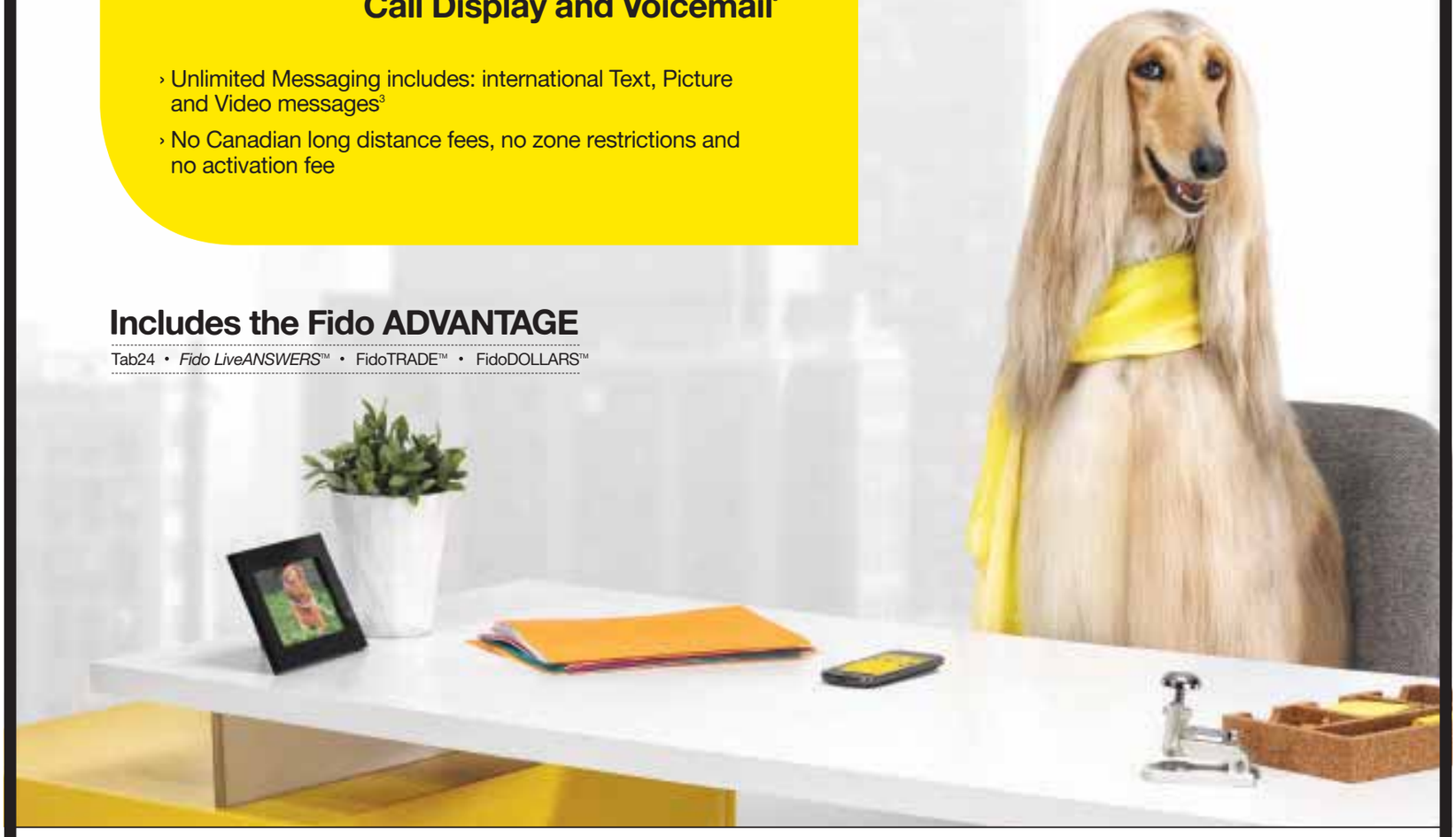

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Have illness, will travel

Medical tourism. Tens of thousands of critically ill Canadians pay hefty price for out-of-province cutting-edge care

MATT KIELTYKA
Metro in Vancouver

Comfortable family-like settings help ease the stress for patients receiving life-saving care far from home. JENNIFER GAUTHIER/FOR METRO

Melanoma patient Mike Allan, top centre, travels from Prince George, B.C., to Edmonton every three months to receive treatment. CONTRIBUTED

Mike Allan wasn't lucid enough even to count down the final days to his death.

Laid out in a hospice, doped up on heavy painkillers and with his family having exhausted all possible avenues to treat his advanced Stage 4b metastatic melanoma, the Prince George, B.C., man had nothing left to do but live out the rest of his life in medicated ignorance.

Until his wife, Karen, received a call from Edmonton's Cross Cancer Institute.

"'I have an idea that might work, but you have to get him here right now,'" Allan, 55, says, relaying his doctor's call. "They threw me in the back of the truck with an oxygen mask and drove to Edmonton."

Flying wasn't an option.

In his condition, transporting Allan to Edmonton by plane would have cost $16,000.

Heavily medicated, Allan doesn't remember anything about that first eight-hour journey from northern B.C. to Edmonton in March of 2011.

All he knows, and all that matters, is that within a week of going on the clinical trial for dabrafenib (available only at the Cross Cancer Institute at the time), he miraculously went from being a terminal patient receiving end-of-life care to being able to breathe on his own.

"I'm still alive!" Allan says when asked how he's fared since, a common response for many cancer survivors.

Making that boast was virtually unthinkable when physicians in B.C. determined the grandfather had run out of treatment options for his skin cancer in 2009.

"Everywhere we went within the regular system, it was always 'no, no, no' and very negative," Allan recalls.

It wasn't until he consulted with Dr. Michael Smylie, a renowned oncologist at the Cross Cancer Institute, that the narrative changed.

"He looked at my chart, looked up at me and (said), 'I can keep you alive,'" Allan says. "It was inspirational that there was hope."

Since his astonishing turnaround, Allan has become something of a medical tourist.

The last person still undertaking his particular clinical trail (recently approved by the federal government as a treatment Canada-wide), Allan hops in his pickup truck and drives to Edmonton every three months for three days of exhaustive tests, treatment and followups.

He's not alone.

Every year, an unknown but sizable number of patients (the Canadian Institute for Health Information says there were 43,590 out-of-province hospitalizations in 2011-12, but does not provide details on the kind of treatments received) leave their communities for centres of excellence across the country that offer cutting-edge therapies and expertise that can't be found elsewhere.

The stresses and costs of travelling outside their communities for potentially life-saving care are staggering for the families involved.

Since clinical trails aren't covered under B.C.'s medical-services plan, Allan and his wife (with the help of some organizations such as Save Your Skin Foundation) put up the bulk of the travel and accommodation costs for each visit to Edmonton.

It's a trip they made 27 times in 2011, 19 times in 2012 and 16 times so far in 2013.

Some expenses can be written off through federal tax benefits, but that covers only a fraction of the cost.

"If I had known how expensive it was going to be, I would have bought a house in Edmonton," Allan jokes.

And then there's the long, winding 740-kilometre drive through some of Canada's harshest terrain.

It's treacherous at the best of times, and a nightmare when winter hits the Rockies.

"That's the most stressful part for us," Allan says. "The circumstances can be beyond your control. We've been stuck for 19 hours once because of a crash ahead of us."

Though he knows the cancer can come back at any point, linking up with an expert in treating melanoma has bought Allan priceless time with his family, including the birth of his grandson, Ryder.

Cost of out-of-town care

$2,800

The cost for families who need to travel to get crucial health care can vary greatly. Canuck Place — which covers the expense for its families — says it costs approximately $2,800 to feed a family of four per month at the hospice.

$3,100

Medical and nursing costs at the hospice range from $1,500 a day for a patient booked in for respite (usually a stable patient staying seven days at a time with family members to relax) to $2,500 for pain and symptom management, and $3,100 for a child receiving end-of-life care.

$40K

Clinical trials for new drugs and treatments can also be expensive, though pharmaceutical companies often pick up the bill. Save Your Skin Foundation founder Kathleen Barnard's clinical trial for melanoma cost a total of $40,000, but was covered by the drug company.

$3.3M

Hope Air — a registered charity that offers free flights for patients to get out-of-town health care — spent $3.3 million in 2012, 82 per cent of that directly on providing 6,091 flights.

It says 28 per cent of clients would otherwise have cancelled or postponed treatment had it not been for Hope Air's flight.

Quoted

"If I had known how expensive it was going to be, I would have bought a house in Edmonton."

Melanoma patient Mike Allan jokes about the expense of the 740-kilometre drive from his home in Prince George, B.C., for three days of treatment every three months.

Making the journey easier

Specialized care can drastically increase quality of life even when arduous travel is involved.

That was the case for the Thomas family of Kelowna, B.C. Their first son, Kaden, was born with a life-limiting heart disease and was quickly linked in with Vancouver's Canuck Place Children's Hospice — the pediatric palliative-care provider in B.C. with 77 per cent of its 450 annual patients coming from outside the Metro Vancouver area.

The family of four accessed Canuck Place for treatment, pain management, counselling and respite services for many years (they moved to Ontario at one point but returned for the drier climate of Kelowna and the care at Canuck Place) until Kaden died in September 2010 at the age of 16.

"The only option locally would be to have him admitted into hospital," mother Jennifer Thomas said.

Physicians at Canuck Place devised effective treatment and pain-management plans for Kaden — pain that local doctors had trouble controlling — and liaised with Kelowna care providers to ensure the wheelchair-bound boy was comfortable at home.

Hospice staff were able to answer "all the hard questions" when local pediatricians couldn't, Thomas said.

"We have just a handful of pediatric palliative-care physicians in the province, and five of them are here," said Canuck Place CEO Margaret McNeil. "A family wants to go somewhere where they know has the best experience with a particular disease. And because they're very complicated, it's hard for a local pediatrician to have that experience."

Brothers Kaden, right, and Colby Thomas were regular visitors of Canuck Place as Kaden received treatment for a life-limiting heart disease. CONTRIBUTED

Beyond medical care, Canuck Place takes the stress off families with counselling, family activities and camp trips many take for granted.

"We didn't have any support like that outside of B.C.," Thomas said. "It made a significant difference with our life, marriage and relationship with our children."

Canuck Place — which gets 80 per cent of its funding from donors — foots the bill.

"We really want to make it easy for families to be here," McNeil said. "We believe that there should be no barriers."

There are countless organizations that ease the financial burden of patients who must leave their communities.

Facilities such as Easter Seals House Vancouver offer rooms for $20 a night, so patients don't pay premium hotel rates while travelling for procedures.

Canuck Place CEO Margaret McNeil says the hospice does everything it can to ease the financial and emotional burdens of treatment. JENNIFER GAUTHIER/FOR METRO

The logistics and cost alone can be a defeating experience, says Save Your Skin Foundation founder Kathleen Barnard.

She ran the gamut in 2005 after being diagnosed with melanoma and is now dedicated to making the process easier for skin-cancer patients.

"It was so tough for us as a family," Barnard said. "Do I want to spend that much money and leave home on something offering a five per cent success rate or is it just an added burden?"

Organizations such as Barnard's exist so families don't have to compromise.

MATT KIELTYKA/METRO

Putting specialized care on the map

The health-care landscape across Canada changes constantly, as hospitals acquire new technology and specialists and provincial governments revise their health-care policies. Here's a look at some of the specialized care that Canadians travel for

Edmonton

Only a handful of surgeons can perform pediatric heart transplants. In Canada, most young patients get their new hearts at the Stollery Children's Hospital in Edmonton or SickKids Hospital in Toronto.

Toronto

SickKids: Children come to SickKids in Toronto for specialized treatments of rare cases and clinical trials. The hospital also has arrangements with some provinces for certain kinds of care. For example, Newfoundland and Nova Scotia send pediatric bone-transplant patients here.

Montreal

People seeking gender-reassignment surgery are often referred to the GRS centre in Montreal. The procedure is covered by most, but not all, provinces' health-care plans.

United States

Some Canadian patients must go to the United States for certain procedures, including Open MRIs (for patients whose claustrophobia prevents them from going in a traditional machine), some types of genetic testing, stem-cell transplants and certain complex orthopedic, ophthalmological and cancer procedures.

Winnipeg

Most Canadian patients who need gamma knife radiosurgery for treatment of certain kinds of brain tumours and other conditions go to the Winnipeg Health Sciences Centre or the University Health Network in Toronto.

Halifax

Patients from New Brunswick, Newfoundland and P.E.I. will go to the Atlantic Canada Multi-Organ Transplant Program at the Queen Elizabeth II Health Sciences Centre in Halifax for kidney, liver, heart and pancreas transplantation services.

TEXT: JESSICA SMITH & MATT KIELTYKA/METRO

Stronach, 80, hops on beefcake bandwagon during campaign

Austria. Canadian auto-parts billionaire takes his shirt off in bid for political office

Austria's general-election campaign is heating up with two high-profile contenders — one of them a Canadian — going way beyond rolling up their shirt sleeves. They've taken the shirts right off.

Borrowing a page from Russian President Vladimir Putin's playbook, the beefcake displays are the latest twist in the rivalry between populist Canadian candidate Frank Stronach and Heinz-Christian Strache, head of the anti-immigrant and EU-skeptic Freedom Party.

The two are both seeking the protest vote in Austria's Sept. 29 election. On a continent where mainstream electioneering is normally a staid affair, Stronach was first to doff his shirt.

Wearing jeans and a smile, he revealed a trim 80-year-old upper body as he stood next to his private lake during weekend interviews with Austrian dailies. "I don't need to be ashamed of my body," said the billionaire founder of auto-parts giant Magna International.

Strache responded immediately. A photo of the tanned and athletic 42-year-old clad in swimming trunks appeared Sunday on his Facebook page, with the caption "top fit in the election campaign!"

The battle went into Round 2 on Monday, with Austria's major newspapers carrying the photos along with articles debating whether they constituted below-the-belt campaigning.

Commenting on the "naked duel," the tabloid Oesterreich praised Stronach for "showing the new self-confidence of the generation '60 plus.' In politics. In fitness. In looks." But it warned that Strache's decision to challenge Stronach's gambit "with his fitness-centre muscles" now risks turning the campaign into a circus.

The rivalry started when Stronach founded his Team Stronach organization last year. It aims for the same voters that Strache's Freedom Party views as its own — Austrians disenchanted with both the conservative People's Party and the Socialists, parties that now form the government coalition.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Bare-chested battle

"I don't need to be ashamed of my body."

Frank Stronach, Austro-Canadian billionaire and founder of auto-parts giant Magna International Inc., as he revealed a trim 80-year-old physique to Austrian media.

Ahead of the Austrian general elections, bare-chested displays are the latest twist in the rivalry between populist Canadian candidate Frank Stronach and Heinz-Christian Strache, left, who heads the anti-immigrant and EU-skeptic Freedom Party. The candidates seem to have taken a page from Russian President Vladimir Putin's playbook. Putin, right, is notorious for an array of stunts, including riding a horse bare-chested. LEFT: AUSTRIAN FREEDOM PARTY VIA FACEBOOK; RIGHT: THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

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Sunday Ticket. Google, NFL holding meetings

Google has been holding meetings with the National Football League, raising speculation that the Internet monolith is seeking new inroads into television.

Other tech companies like Apple are reportedly in talks with cable providers to boost access to blockbuster television shows through their devices.

With Google sitting on a cash pile of $48 billion US, the league's Sunday Ticket package is easily within its reach. Earlier this year, Google chief financial officer Patrick Pichette said, "It serves the shareholder best to actually have that strategic ability to pounce" when there is the opportunity to make a major acquisition.

The NFL confirmed its meetings with Google but declined to discuss the nature of those talks, as did Google.

"Members of our office meet often with innovative leaders in Silicon Valley and around the world," the NFL said in a statement. "We are constantly looking for ways to make our game better on the field, in the stadium and for fans."

The contract is currently held by DirecTV, which pays about $1 billion US annually for the rights. That contract, however, expires at the end of the 2014 season. Citi analyst Jason Bazinet believes that DirecTV is losing money on the deal, generating only about $725 million US a year in revenue.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Baltimore Ravens fans watch Super Bowl XLVII. GETTY IMAGES FILE

Internet access

New Facebook partnership aims to get 7B online

Facebook wants to get more of the world's seven billion people — all of them, actually — online through a partnership with some of the world's largest mobile-technology companies. The partnership, called Internet.org, includes electronics giant Samsung, handset maker Nokia and wireless-chip maker Qualcomm Inc. Plans include developing cheaper smartphones and tools to reduce the amount of data required to run apps.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Market Minute

DOLLAR 95.48¢ (-0.78¢)

TSX 12,573.08 (-97.03)

OIL $103.85 US (-$1.26)

GOLD $1,370.10 US (-$2.50)

Natural gas: $3.47 US (+3¢)
Dow Jones: 14,897.55 (-105.44)

TIME TO SHARPEN YOUR PENCILS

HE SAYS

John Mazerolle
metronews.ca

It's almost time for kids to head back to school, which means the back-to-school ads have been out so long that many of the principal actors in them have died.

It's given me lots of time to think about back to school, and reinforced for me how important it is to buy the right things for your school-aged children, lest you ruin their fragile lives.

No pressure.

I don't have kids myself, which makes me the perfect person to tell you what to buy for yours: Friends are always telling me about what their best-laid child-rearing plans are. But then their kids don't come according to spec and suddenly they're doing things they swore they'd never do.

So as a childless guy I can bring an unsullied perspective to the back-to-school purchases — and jump right to the decisions you're going to make anyway without the high-principled hand-wringing in between.

To me, back to school is the young person's version of New Year's resolutions — proof that we can start with a clean slate and get it right this time. A sweet lie, in other words.

I still miss the back-to-school gift package — mostly because I haven't had a nice, fresh set of clothes since 1993.

I've bought new clothes since then, sure, but I mostly replace items one at a time as they become too threadbare to wear. Sometimes I time it just right and walk into the Gap as a growing gap in my jeans reaches the breaking point, and my pants moult from my body as I enter the changing room, like a denim lobster.

So nothing was better than a whole set of new clothes, backpack and math gear (something where the dinosaur's head turns from different angles, please).

A school-grade kid can quickly build up a lot of baggage — in my case, a backpack filled with ink stains, crumpled papers from three months ago and a crushed banana I'd forgotten about.

But back-to-school supplies also offered a symbolic reset: I could forget about the time I cried in home economics because the teacher yelled when I forgot to add soap while washing the dishes. I could forget when I buried a rose in the snow because Missy Titus wouldn't accept it on Valentine's Day. It helped me forget getting a concussion playing soccer baseball (the concussion helped, too).

Those clean, perfectly folded shirts and pants lying on the bed brought a sense of order to my life. I don't know why I wasn't more popular.

So my advice to parents is: Buy distracting stuff. It doesn't have to be the best stuff, or the most trendy stuff. Just bright and shiny enough that your kids can forget how miserable school is. Bags of eraser shavings were popular at one point in my schooling. So don't go nuts.

With the right level of distraction protecting them from their school years, they can grow up to be whatever they want, maybe even the principals in back-to-school advertising. It's a year-round business.

ZOOM

Way to impress a lady

COURTESY RED BULL

Diver wows near Statue of Liberty

New York's Statue of Liberty was the backdrop for world champion diver Orlando Duque to leap from a helicopter hovering 75 feet (22.86 metres) above the Hudson River. Duque, 38, from Cali, Colombia, performed the stunt to promote the fifth stop of the Red Bull Cliff Diving World Series due to take place in Boston on Aug. 25.

METRO

Diver's viewpoint

"It doesn't get any better than diving in front of something as iconic as the Statue of Liberty."

Orlando Duque, high diver from Cali, Colombia

Dive in seconds

3

seconds is all the time Duque had to land a flying back somersault while travelling at speeds of 80 km/h.

Clickbait

HANNAH ZITNER
hannah.zitner@metronews.ca

Last year's taxes still not done? Instead of fretting over making time for these necessary-but-heinous tasks, why not get someone else to take care of them for you? Say goodbye to life's annoying administrative chores and hello to outsourcing with the help of these sites:

AskForTask.com:
Toronto-based startup connects people across Canada who either need a hand or have an extra one to offer for anything from cleaning the tub to building a website .

DoMyStuff.com:
Connects people needing help with people offering to give help with just about anything (though the site could benefit from connecting with a designer).

Letters

metronews.ca

RE: Vancouver's Science World Trying To Teach Kids About Sex? How Dare They ... published Aug. 21

They are already being sexualized between magazines, TV, video games, music, and other societal things. This is a huge learning moment for you and your children. Take it, show them and let them ask questions. Education is power, not ignorance or hiding.
Heather Avery posted to metronews.ca

It is better to teach the kids about sex so they can make an informed decision. I'd rather have the kids know about sex minus the self righteous moral guardians than have teenage pregnancies. I have seen that one first hand with someone I knew in middle school who was 13 and pregnant. She ended up dropping out shortly after.
Taggart Romkey posted to metronews.ca

Let's all assume: This is at a public event and establishment. Committees will have been involved in deciding what, and what not, to include. It will be suitable for both genders and for the recommended ages of viewers.

It will likely be better than anything an anxious parent, or a priest, or a misguided peer, or a movie could show and tell. And it provides an opportunity for parents to have an educated talk with their curious kids, or maybe become better educated themselves.

If I lived in Vancouver, I would go. If my kids were not already grown up, I'd take them. Maybe I'd see it myself first to see if it's suitable. We had all the sex conversations with them before they were old enough to reproduce, for their own protection and ours.
DaleWale posted to metronews.ca

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU:
Send us your comments: reginaletters@metronews.ca

metro

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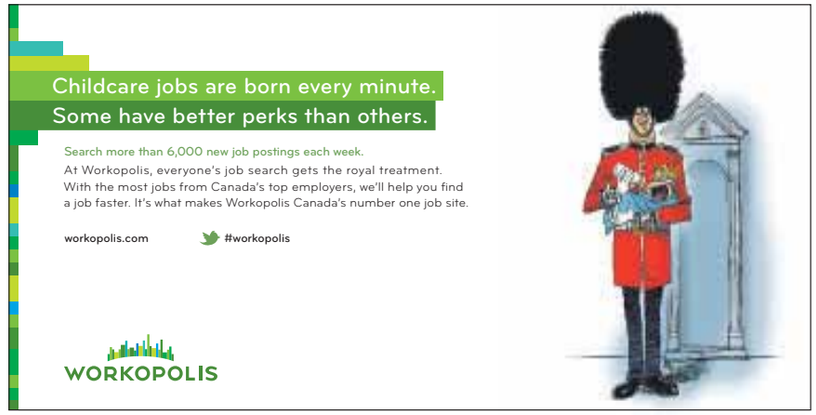
3. Email your entry to captionchallenge@workopolis.com

▼▼Sample advertisement▼▼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Madchild's new album Lawn Mower Man, released on Aug. 6, has already hit the No. 2 spot on the Canadian music charts. LOIS KWOK/CONTRIBUTED

Mowing the past for music

Top rap album. Swollen Members' Madchild moves forward from dark days with album that celebrates life

BACKSTAGE PASS
Alyssa McDonald
alyssa.mcdonald@metronews.ca

Madchild is putting his past behind him and emerging with a different sound in his recently released full-length, sophomore solo album Lawn Mower Man.

The Vancouver rapper says the sound on the album is "more raw energy" than on his first full-length solo project Dope Stick — which took the top spot on iTunes Canada in only 12 hours in 2012 — and focuses on the forward progression in his life.

"My first album Dope Stick was kind of going over what I went through with my addictions," Madchild told Metro from British Columbia about kicking his $500-a-day pill habit three years ago.

"This album is more, 'I went over that, it is in the past and it's time to move forward and celebrate life again.'"

He also noted that the first single — a collaboration with Canadian singer Sophia Danai called It Gets Better — reflects on his making up for lost time and enjoying life again.

"Sometime I will spend a lot of times working on lyrics, but it was one of those songs where the lyrics just poured out of me," he said. "It was just speaking the truth and speaking about where I am at in life."

Known only to a small audience as Shane Bunting, Madchild has 20 years of experience as a driving force with Juno Award-winning hip-hop crew Swollen Members, and now with a successful solo career. Lawn Mower Man, which was released on Aug. 6, has already hit the No. 2 spot on the Canadian music charts and is the top rap album in the country.

"I started getting a little nervous about what people were going to think about this record, because it's a little bit different (than the other albums)," said Madchild.

"But I was very happy with the way that it has been embraced. I couldn't be much happier."

Fans in Regina will be able to get a taste of his new album this weekend when Swollen Members, including rapper Prevail and producer Rob the Viking, perform at SaskTel Summer Invasion in Wascana Park on Saturday night.

"It'll be a Swollen Members show, but I will definitely do a couple Madchild (solo) songs too," he said. "You'll get the best of both worlds."

The audience, he added, should expect classic Swollen Members hits and "raw energy, excitement and just a really good time."

"We are just going to go out and rock it," said Madchild. "Prevail is like Spiderman on stage and if there is something to climb, he will climb it."

Madchild has been splitting his time between touring with Swollen Members and his album tour, and has done about 180 shows in the past 14 months.

"I enjoy doing both, but the great thing is the guys have been really supportive — I can still be in Swollen Members, but I can also be a solo rapper as well," said Madchild.

"There was nothing I wanted to do more than to keep rapping. It's who I am — it's what I love doing."

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METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

Simon Cowell. ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

Father-to-be Cowell finally finds his voice

Simon Cowell is finally speaking out about the unexpected pregnancy of gal pal Lauren Silverman — and for once he's playing nice. "Things are changing in my life right now, for the better. I'm proud to be a dad," he tells the BBC. "It's something I haven't thought of before ... now I know I feel good about it. And she's a very special girl." Silverman and her husband — and Cowell's pal — Andrew Silverman reached a divorce settlement just last week.

Wentworth Miller

Russian invite rejection signals Miller's coming out

Prison Break actor Wentworth Miller declined an invitation to the St. Petersburg International Film Festival, publishing his response on GLAAD's website: "Thank you for your kind invitation. As someone who has enjoyed visiting Russia in the past it would make me happy to say yes. However, as a gay man, I must decline. I am deeply troubled by the current attitude toward and treatment of gay men and women by the Russian government. The situation is in no way acceptable, and I cannot in good conscience participate in a celebratory occasion hosted by a country where people like myself are being systematically denied their basic right to live and love openly."

The Word

Scientology failed to get Bono and Brad on the hook

The Church of Scientology tried to recruit both Brad Pitt and Bono in the 1990s, according to former Scientologist Jenna Miscavige Hill, niece of Church leader David Miscavige. "I think that celebrities are more inclined to be egocentric and Scientology caters for that — you're your own God. They're probably being told that all the time," she tells Radar Online. "But they're probably insecure, so the self-help of Scientology lends itself to that. And Scientology is meant to save people and the world, so the charitable thing appeals to a celebrity. If you're egocentric, not always confident or insecure because of being in the public eye and want to be charitable, Scientology pushes your buttons. That's why someone like Bono would fit the bill perfectly as so many people know him." According to Miscavige Hill, Pitt went through the Church's entry-level Purification Program while dating Juliette Lewis but ultimately decided it wasn't for him.

Jennifer Lawrence

X marks the spot as Hoult and Lawrence begin again

Talk about a sequel: It looks like Jennifer Lawrence and ex-boyfriend Nicholas Hoult have rekindled their romance. The pair, who first met filming X-Men: First Class in 2011 and dated until earlier this year, have been in Montreal filming X-Men: Days of Future Past — and spending plenty of off-duty time together, too, according to E! News. Lawrence and Hoult took a day off in Montreal's La Fontaine Park earlier this week, strolling hand-in-hand before sharing a bottle of champagne and cuddling up on the grass. A source says they were very touchy-feely and laughed a lot during their outing. Earlier, they showed up at the film's wrap party together.

Lindsay Lohan

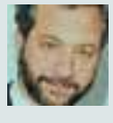
Lohan's Oprah sit down doesn't live up to billing

Despite all the buzz and build-up, Lindsay Lohan's much-discussed sit-down with Oprah Winfrey failed to produce much in the way of ratings. The one-hour special averaged 892,000 viewers during its premiere, with an average of 504,000 viewers tuning in for the encore broadcast that immediately followed. By contrast, Winfrey's interview with Lance Armstrong in January pulled in 4.3 million viewers, breaking records for her OWN network. The Lohan special came in just above normal.

Twitter

@ElizabethHurley
Another gorgeous day- is this the best English summer we've had for years? Bliss....

@MichaelChiklis
When I think of all the different languages that developed literally right next to each other I can't help but think: How did Europe happen?



@JuddApatow
At least I didn't eat fries. (Positive re-enforcement for the end of the day

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The foolproof transitional season uniform

The perfect, simple outfit to cleanse your palate before autumn's trends roll in

METRO WORLD NEWS

The simple, classic white shirt and jeans combination is an under appreciated thing. Too often it gets bogged down with hyper-personalization: a wacky jacket here, piles of quirky necklace layering there. It's that rare, perfect outfit in which a set of fashion staples converge in a can't-screw-it-up formula. But sometimes, the best way to pull this off is by not tampering with it too much. The simplicity makes this look a nice breather of a palate cleanser before preparing to unpack all of the heady, intensity (bell shaped skirts the size of small cities anyone?) that will be autumn's trends.

Topshop
Moto Smokey Green Leigh Jeans, $76, topshop.com.

Lizzy Disney
Lock Bag – Black, $430, darkroom-london.com.

& Other Stories
Leather Belt, $44, stories.com

Charlie Collins, who we spotted in London, looks flawless in an unaffected kind of way because she didn't go overboard with the styling. METRO

Zara
button neck blouse, $50, zara.com.

Loeffler Randal
Pippa Collar flats, $275, shopbop.com.

Spitfire
Mainstream Wayfarer Sunglasses, $41, asos.com.

Dress it like Beckham

David Beckham for H&M
HANDOUT

H&M to sport the vintage and the varsity this season

Trend-conscious gentlemen who head into H&M this fall will likely pick up on the heritage sportswear feel of David Beckham Bodywear pieces. The newest campaign launched on Aug. 22 and is full of old East London atmosphere. Raglan-sleeve jersey and henleys come in athletic greys, alongside grey tank tops and a three-pack of grey trunks.

Pajamas are an essential both for lounging and sleep, and this autumn there are ribbed pajama pants, as well as full-length or short pants in drawstring jersey.

Coinciding with the new pieces will be a brand-new campaign set in an old-style sports changing room. It marks the latest stage in David Beckham's long-term collaboration with H&M, centred on a core collection of body wear pieces which are available all year round.

METRO

Kellan Lutz GETTY IMAGES

I love fashion Lutz and Lutz

What's a hulking vampire to do without moody mortals in distress and with no more computer-enhanced battles to wage in the forest?

For 28-year-old Twilight actor Kellan Lutz — better known as Emmett, the heartthrob brother of leading man Edward — it's still about looking as good as superhumanly possible.

Lutz unveiled his Pre-Spring 2014 collection with Abbot + Main this week in Las Vegas during MAGIC, one of the fashion world's most influential trade shows.

"It's great to find something outside of acting," he said in an interview Monday at a Las Vegas Strip hotel suite, resting a chiselled, stubbly chin on a sofa pillow.

Born in North Dakota and raised in Arizona and the Midwest — places he described as trendiness-challenged — he started modelling at 14 and developed an eye for style hanging out with fashion and photography greats.

Soon enough, he stopped borrowing clothes from some of his six brothers. They were borrowing from him.

His brand — which debuted in 2011 and is named after an intersection in the beachy-cool Venice Beach, Calif. neighbourhood where Lutz once lived — mainly consists of soft, slim-fitting T-shirts and not-trying-too-hard hoodies.

Initially just for men, two-thirds of the collection is now for women.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

HOMES THAT ARE TAILORED FOR YOU

FROM RED DOOR VENTURE GROUP

CONTRIBUTED

A family looking for a new home should have as much freedom as possible to choose the home that's right for them, says to Jaimey Midtdal, spokesperson for The Red Door Venture Group.

Red Door Venture Group's Wolferidge Rural Program is a new group of housing developments that allows buyers to choose their perfect home, and then choose the perfect location from a range of pre-approved neighbourhoods.

"We wanted to make sure our buyers didn't have to compromise on either their home model or location," Midtdal says.

The Wolferidge Rural Program has provided a range of four home models in pre-approved neighbourhoods throughout southern Saskatchewan, which will soon be available for purchase.

Unlike homes at most housing developments, each home in the Wolferidge Rural Program is CSA-approved, pre-built, ready-to-move, so buyers can move in immediately.

The recently launched range of four homes is perfect for a variety of buyers, from those purchasing a home for the first time, to more established buyers looking for room to grow.

These four practical floor plans — Athabasca, Greenwater, Blackstrap and Cypress — range in size from 1,000 square feet to 1,300 square feet and feature two or three bedrooms.

Athabasca, the largest of the four at 1,304 square feet, is home to three bedrooms, one bath, and a master bedroom with a walk-in closet.

Greenwater has space for a family, with three bedrooms, one bath and a large open kitchen with a walk-in pantry.

For the single person or couple who are thinking about starting a family, Blackstrap fits the bill. At 1,040 square feet, it features two bedrooms and one bath, with a practical main-floor laundry.

At 1,120 square feet, with three bedrooms and one bath, Cypress has everything you need if you are looking for high quality on a slightly smaller scale.

For more information, please see RedDoorVentureGroup.ca.

JOIN IN SASKATCHEWAN'S SUCCESS

There is real estate potential as far as the eye can see in Saskatchewan. It's potential that investors should be taking advantage of, according to Jaimey Midtdal, spokesperson for Red Door Venture Group.

The land of the living skies has attracted real estate developers with its burgeoning economy and its future growth potential.

Red Door Venture Group, a Regina-based real estate marketing company, will be selling some of the best value homes in Canada.

"The province's solid economic foundation has allowed unprecedented growth in Saskatchewan, and the real estate market has followed suit," Midtdal says. "The boom in immigration and increased job opportunities are really making Saskatchewan one of the best places in Canada to buy a home. It's growth we're proud to be a part of."

Red Door Venture Group has paired with the best local developers to deliver high-quality homes in the as-yet undeveloped land near Regina.

COLOURBOX

"We work with developers from the land acquisition stage all the way through concept design and sales, to produce turn-key developments for our clients," Midtdal says. "We turn good ideas into profit for our customers."

Red Door Venture Group gives its clients the tools they need to take care of the entire home building and marketing process, stress-free, Midtdal says.

"We take great care for each and every project we're a part of. We integrate into your team so we can see the process clearly through from start to finish."

Wolferidge Rural Program is one of Red Door Venture Group's current projects, delivering CSA-approved, pre-built, ready-to-move homes to buyers.

The development is an innovation of Red Door Venture Group's, Midtdal says.

"We rethought real estate development with Wolferidge Rural Program so that buyers can choose their homes from a selection of four well-appointed models, which are situated in several different neighbourhoods."

For more information, or to schedule a complementary consultation, please visit RedDoorVentureGroup.ca.

SUMMER EVENTS IN FULL SWING

The sense of community this summer in Regina is palpable, says Jaimey Midtdal, spokesperson for Red Door Venture Group, a real estate marketing firm based out of Regina.

"Our buyers are out in full force with help from the beautiful weather," he says. "Regina has so much to offer for anyone looking to get out and have fun."

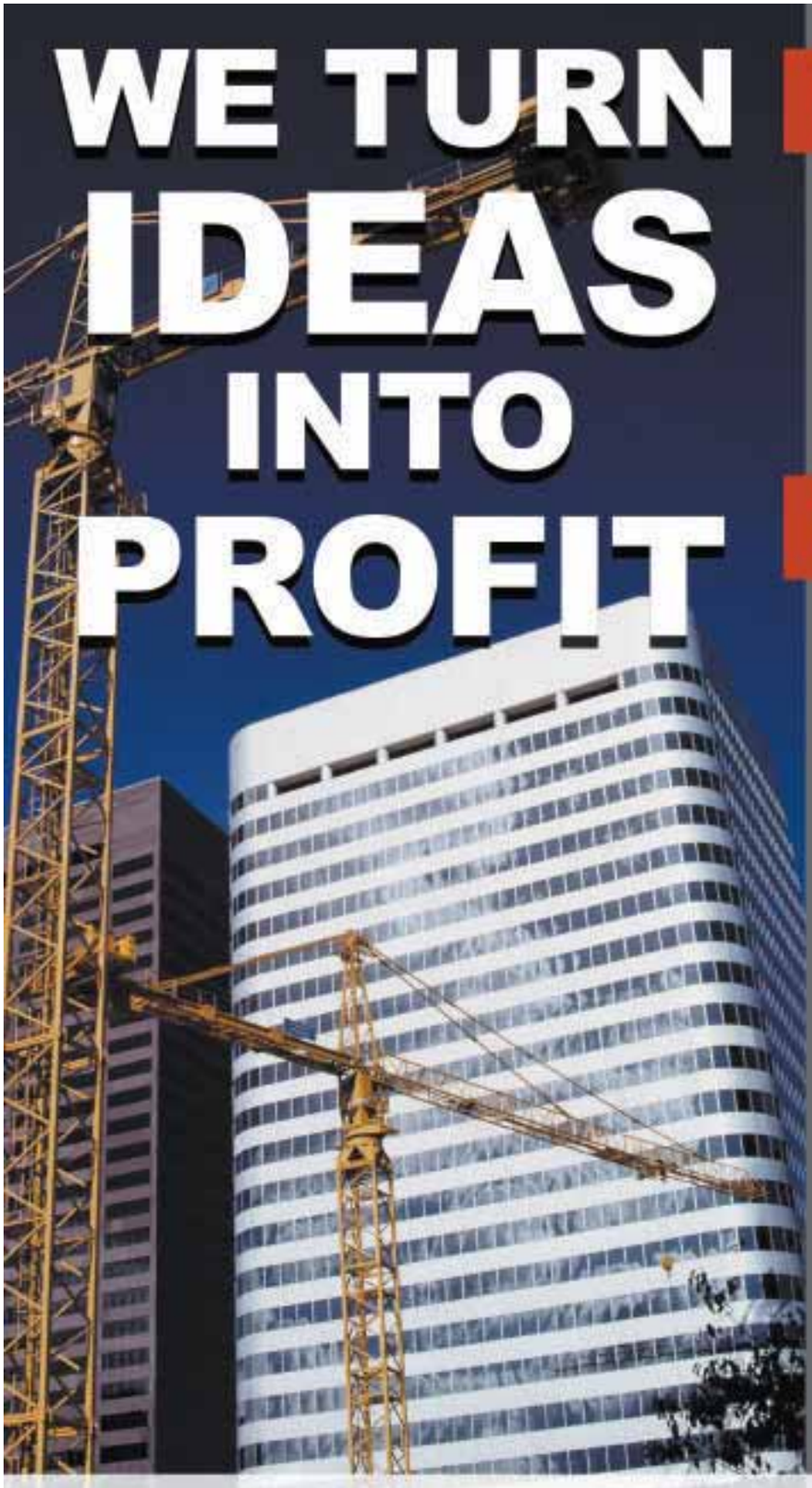
That includes a myriad of free events this summer, including salsa dancing at City Square, free yoga in Victoria Park, and Cinema Under the Stars every Wednesday in the Plaza.

All ages are welcome at Exploration Day in the Park for Kids every Tuesday, featuring new sports, crafts and other activities every week.

The Regina Downtown Concert Series brings the Casino Regina Summer Stage to life with upcoming performances by local musicians.

For a full list of the events taking place in downtown Regina this summer, visit reginadowntown.ca.

WE TURN IDEAS INTO PROFIT



WHO ARE WE?

Red Door Venture Group is a multi-faceted firm dedicated to real estate developers that are looking to make their mark in the booming province of Saskatchewan. Our commitment is to produce turn-key developments for clients from land acquisition to concept and design to sales. We have an easy all-service system available to our clients. Whether you are a long-term Saskatchewan developer or a new developer interested in Saskatchewan, we are the ones to turn to.

OUR VALUES

Excellence
We take the most precise, concise, consistent approach when getting things done.

Ethics
We treat people with respect and interest, tailoring our interactions with them.

Accountability At All Levels
We do what we say we are going to do.

Confidentiality
We are entrusted with information that becomes our business and we keep it our business.

Loyalty
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Collaboration
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HOMES WITH EVERY STYLE AND BUDGET

The Bordeaux name was chosen by its owners because it was a name that identifies with a higher end product and something a little different.

Bordeaux at Hawkstone is a little different. The first unique thing about the project is that it is bordered by green space on three sides, which is different than your ordinary project that may be found on a busy street or nestled next to retail commercial development. A subdivision park will be developed immediately to the west of the project.

The construction of Bordeaux is also a little different, while many materials other contractors would consider upgrades have been included in the base specifications for the project. Fibre cement siding, manufactured stone, and aluminum-clad windows are just a few of the extras included in Bordeaux.

The exteriors are also distinctly different. With drive-by consumers asking for more unique and modern exteriors, Bordeaux has answered the call.

Moving to the interiors, many of the extras are also included. Granite countertops, barbecue outlets, and under-cabinet lighting are some of the many standard features in Bordeaux.

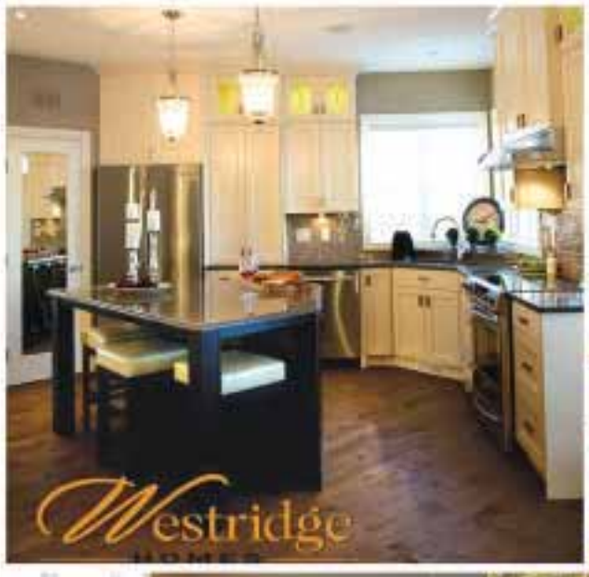
Bordeaux at Hawkstone is built by Pekarbilt Homes. Although Pekarbilt is a new face to the Regina market, its staff is not. Pekarbilt combines more than 75 years of staff experience in home construction, design technology, land development, project management, sales and service.

Pekarbilt is Regina-owned and operated, and is proud to develop the city of Regina and surrounding area. It is important for Pekarbilt to invest, build, and price with integrity. Pekarbilt has the flexibility and expertise to bring a positive correlation between your dream and the amount on which you are comfortable spending.

With many diverse, ongoing, and upcoming projects, Pekarbilt has a design for almost every need, style, and budget.

CONTRIBUTED

OUR NEW HARBOUR LANDING SHOW HOME



Westridge
HOMES

Show Home Opening
August 24

4949 Wright Road – Harbour Landing

Saturday, August 24th 1pm – 4pm
Sunday August 25th 2pm – 4pm

Our New Harbour Landing show home has an exterior featuring dark oak v-ribbed overhead doors and acrylic stucco with stone accents. As you walk up to the front step, a flagstaff plank front door welcomes you into the home.

Step inside onto driftwood coloured tile and find nine foot ceilings that complement the size of the rooms. Walk past the powder room with its tile accent wall and the stairway into a large kitchen and great room.

The kitchen features an oversize island that is eight and a half feet long and finished in a rich peppercorn colour with a quartz countertop that is offset by the ceiling high maple cabinets which are finished in a clove colour. Pewter coloured oak flooring anchors the rooms for a balanced effect. Enjoy the large windows on the main floor which overlook the creek and pathways behind the house. To the right is the gas fireplace in the great room with its floor-to-ceiling stone face and behind is an office with similar stone accents. Off to the left is the dining area with garden doors to a barbecue deck that has glass panel railing so as not to block the view of the green space behind the house. Open a pocket door off the kitchen to find a closet, bench and hooks in a mudroom with a tile floor that provides access to the triple car garage which is insulated and finished in the same colours as the house.

Walk up the stairs while enjoying the natural light from the large window in the stairwell – bte careful not to miss the coffered ceiling above the stairs. At the top of the stairs off to the right is the carpeted master bedroom complete with en-suite featuring a stand-alone tub with a tile accent wall and a separate tile shower. The en-suite has easy access to a walk-in closet and the laundry room which is a perfect set-up for shift workers not wanting to disturb their sleeping partner when dressing and leaving. The other three bedrooms all have their own walk-in closets with custom built closet organizers. Rounding out the upper floor is a full bathroom with its own tile shower and clove coloured vanity with a quartz countertop. Going back down the stairs to the lower walkout level, you will again find nine foot high ceilings. This level features one bedroom, a full bathroom, a wet bar with a stone feature wall and pendant lighting, along with a large family room for entertaining. For comfort, the concrete slab is insulated with in-floor heat, and the walls and joist ends are all spray foamed. It is again hard to miss the many windows that look onto the back yard and the garden doors opening to a patio giving access to the yard and walking pathways that make up Harbour Landing. The house is 3300 sq ft finished on all three levels (2243 on main floor and upper with another 1057 on the walk-out level).

www.westridgehomes.ca

Global style comes to Canada

Zara Home opens in the Great White North, allowing Canucks access to the Spanish store's decor gems.

DESIGN CENTRE
Karl Lohnes
home@metronews.ca

When Zara fashion stores first opened in Spain more than 30 years ago, they were a big hit.

Their up-to-date fashions at affordable prices has always kept the global-style shopper happy. Now home decor enthusiasts have something equally exciting to look forward to: Zara opens its first home decor and style store at Yorkdale Shopping Centre in Toronto on Thursday, followed by an opening at Carrefour Laval in Quebec.

From small furnishings, bedding and tabletops Zara offers up-to-the-minute home fashions for every room in the house. Twice weekly new home fashions will be delivered to stores to keep the merchandise fresh and the assortment new every time you visit.

Canadians can now also shop online at zarahome.com.

I went shopping around and here's a sneak peak at a few of our in-store and online favourites; luxury-styled items caught my eye as must-haves this fall.

Expect a wide range of decor styles to be sold at Zara stores and online. New products are introduced every two weeks, which gives home decor enthusiasts a reason to visit the Zara stores often.

Ceramic Lamp $200

Navy and white never go out of fashion and look crisp with the neutrals or pops with other strong colours. Switch the white shade for a gold metallic and it will go from traditional-chic to instant glamour. Buy these in pairs — a good way to display classic lamps.

Gold Monogrammed Flatware $10-12

Gold is one of the season's biggest decor trends, so why not add it to your dining experience? These are ultra chic and not just for formal occasions. After all, you deserve the everyday lux experience of eating with this latest trend.

Square Glass Tables $270

Wherever you place them, these tables will make your room look light, airy and sophisticated. Two sets side by side will make a very versatile coffee table for the living room.

Velvet Cushion with Feather Trim $60

Lux prevails with fresh green velvet and feathers. A great way to add this year's most coveted colour and to wake up a boring chaise lounge or neutral sofa. Use with caution — no more than two pillows or your sofa will look like an ostrich farm.

Fur Blanket $200

A great wrap for chilly nights on the patio or by the fire during the winter months; luxury fur trims are everywhere on the fashion runways and the trend in home decor is no exception.

Lane Way Homes in Harbour Landing *Prices Starting at $354,044*

The Aries

1418 sq.ft.
5318 Whereatt Road
$387,168

The Lyra

1318 sq. ft.
5314 Whereatt Road
$367,568

The Orion

1377 sq.ft.
5322 Whereatt Road
$386,377

The Pavo

1448 sq. ft.
5310 Whereatt Road
$393,048

Show Homes
244N Thauberger Road
5301 Mitchinson Way
Monday – Thursday 7-9pm
Saturday & Sunday 1-5pm

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Above prices include house, lot, GST, connection fees & piles. Images are artist renditions and are subject to change.

Modernize your home on a strict budget

Discounted countertops that may have a blemish can save you a bundle. ISTOCK IMAGES

DIY ideas. Whether it's your kitchen, bath, backyard or your house itself that's in need of an update, there are plenty of ways to freshen up your home on a limited budget

Start from the ground up
Instead of spending thousands on flooring, leaving your subfloors exposed can create a unique and rustic look for a fraction of the cost. Plywood, pine boards and OSB subflooring generally have an unfinished appearance. You'll just need to rent a sander to smooth out the wood, and then finish off the look by applying a few coats of varnish.

Everything but the kitchen sink
Installing a new kitchen countertop can really upgrade the look and feel of your kitchen, but can also break the bank.

Instead, take the time to scour through home stores for discounted pieces of countertop that may have slight blemishes. These imperfections may be unnoticeable to guests, and can add character to your kitchen at a drastically lower cost.

Pack it in
Custom cabinets and built-in shelves can be useful storage solutions with a hefty price tag. Restoring discarded items from restaurants or offices undergoing renovations can be cost-effective ways to set up storage in your home.

Go off the rails
Cable railings have become a hot commodity in homes, serving as both a fashionable and functional stairway feature. As an alternative, hiring a bike welder to build a similar metal railing to save thousands of dollars and create the same industrial feel.

On the cutting edge
Installing crown moulding can add an elegant border finish to any living room, but this often comes with a high price.

Substitute expensive crown moulding with smaller pieces of panel moulding, then paint in between to create the illusion of one large piece of crown moulding.

Feel a glow
Up-lighting is a system used to bounce indirect light off the ceiling and then back down into the room, creating a pleasant and welcoming ambiance.

As these systems can be costly, re-using external gutters can be a cost-effective alternative. First pain the gutters then mount to your walls, then place in fluorescent lights to complete the up-lighting system.

DIY NETWORK CANADA OFFERS MORE TIPS FOR YOUR ENTIRE HOME, AND ALL IN ONE NIGHT WITH ALL NEW SEASONS OF HOUSE CRASHERS, KITCHEN CRASHERS, BATH CRASHERS AND YARD CRASHERS AIRING WEDNESDAYS AT 9 P.M. ET/PT BEGINNING AUG. 28 ON DIY NETWORK CANADA

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Regina, SK

An ice dam can occur when snow accumulates on the roof of a house with inadequate insulation. Heat conducted through the insufficient insulation warms the roof and melts the snow on those areas of the roof that are above living spaces, but does not melt the snow on roof overhangs. Eventually, ice accumulates along the eave and in the gutter. Snow that melts later cannot drain properly through the ice on the eave and in the gutter, resulting in leaks which lead to damaged ceilings, walls, roof structures and insulation. Right now the Government is offering grants to homeowners who want to protect their homes by reinforcing their existing attic insulation. There is no better time to protect your home.

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Mirror, mirror on the wall, who's the most versatile risotto of them all?

"This is a great risotto recipe that uses lemon and asparagus as its flavour boosters. Feel free to experiment with other vegetables and cheeses to create your own signature risotto," writes Mary Rolph Lamontagne in her book Eats.

Ingredients

- 3 cups chicken stock, approx. (or vegetable stock for a vegetarian option)
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1/4 cup minced onion
- 1 cup arborio rice
- 1/4 cup dry white wine
- 1/2 tsp lemon zest
- 1/4 cup soft goat's cheese
- 1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 cup cooked, chopped asparagus
- Salt and pepper
- 1 tsp butter
- Pea shoots (optional)

1. Bring the stock to a simmer in a saucepan.

2. In a separate medium-sized saucepan, heat 2 tablespoons of oil over medium heat. Add the onion and cook for a few minutes until translucent. Add the rice and cook for 2 minutes more, stirring until nicely coated and opaque in colour. Add the wine and stir until most of it has been absorbed.

3. Add 1/2 cup of stock to the rice, stirring continuously until the liquid is almost completely absorbed. Add more stock in 1/2 cup increments and repeat this process until the rice is tender, but still firm to the bite, 15–20 minutes. Remove from the heat.

4. Gently stir in the lemon zest, goat's cheese, Parmesan and the asparagus. Add salt and pepper to taste and the butter. Cover and set aside for 3–5 minutes. Serve with a garnish of Parmesan shavings and pea shoots.

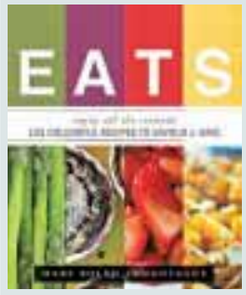
Asparagus Risotto

This recipe serves six. CONTRIBUTED/ EATS BY MARY ROLPH LAMONTAGNE

ALL RECIPES EXCERPTED FROM EATS ENJOY ALL THE SECONDS: 135 COLOURFUL RECIPES TO SAVOUR BY MARY ROLPH LAMONTAGNE, WITH PERMISSION.

Cookbook of the Week

A splash of colour for your table



Eats by Mary Rolph Lamontagne is filled with creative recipes and simple basics — from all over the world — that make using leftovers a breeze. Fruits and vegetables (the most highly wasted items in a fridge) are prepared in master recipes and then reinvented in three or four others. Mary also offers tips for buying, growing, cooking, storing and freezing ingredients.

Among the recipes are: Tanzanian Eggplant Curry, Apple Sauce Spice Muffins, Spinach and Ricotta Gnocchi, and more. METRO

Red bell pepper cream effortlessly jazzes up chicken

This recipe serves four. CONTRIBUTED/ EATS BY MARY ROLPH LAMONTAGNE

"Serving this red bell pepper sauce with grilled chicken jazzes up the dish without too much effort," writes Mary Rolph Lamontagne in her book Eats. "I also use this sauce on grilled fish."

The sauce can be made ahead and kept in the fridge for three days. It can also be used as a pasta sauce.

1. Mix the oil, garlic, chili powder and oregano together in a small bowl. Add the chicken and coat with the mixture. Set aside for at least 30 minutes.

2. While the chicken is marinating, make the red pepper sauce. Heat 2 tablespoons of the olive oil in a pan over medium heat. Add the bell peppers, chili and garlic and sauté for 2–3 minutes until the vegetables are tender.

3. Add the vinegar, lemon juice and cream and cook for an additional 2–3 minutes. Remove from the heat and allow to cool to room temperature.

4. Purée the pepper mixture in a food processor or blender and season with salt and pepper. Return the pepper mixture to the pan and reheat before serving.

5. Heat the grill and cook the chicken fillets over medium heat for approximately 5 minutes per side.

6. Serve with the sauce.

Ingredients

- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 tsp chili powder
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 4 chicken breast fillets, pounded

Red bell pepper cream

- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 2 roasted red bell peppers
- 1/2 red chili pepper, seeded and sliced
- 1 tbsp minced garlic
- 2 tbsp apple cider vinegar
- juice of 1/2 medium lemon
- 1/2 cup whipping cream
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Appetizer. Zucchini Bites

"This is a great way to use up leftover plain quinoa or even quinoa that has been prepared with flavourful herbs or minced vegetables," writes Mary Rolph Lamontagne in her book Eats.

"Add some egg, a little flour and some cheese and you cannot go wrong."

Lamontagne sometimes substitutes chopped cooked spinach for the grated zucchini, uses rice flour for gluten-free bites and changes the cheese to cheddar for a different flavour.

1. Preheat the oven to 180 C (350 F). Grease a mini-muffin pan.

2. Combine all the ingredients in a large bowl.

3. Fill the muffin cups to the top with the quinoa mixture. Bake for 15–20 minutes, or until a tester comes out clean. Serve with a dollop of crème fraîche mixed with a spoonful of sweet chili sauce, a South African favourite.

Ingredients

- 2 cups cooked quinoa
- 3 eggs
- 1 cup grated zucchini
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tsp dried thyme
- a pinch of paprika
- 1/2 cup grated Emmenthal cheese
- 1 tbsp flour
- Salt and pepper to taste

Prepare for homework

MICHELLE WILLIAMS
For Metro

One way to improve grades is to set up space to do homework and make sure you have all the materials you need on hand. DMITRY KALINOVSKY/COLOURBOX

Just about any parent will agree that one reason to not look forward to the start of school is homework.

Here are some easy and effective tips from Toronto District School Board principal Cassandra Alviani-Alvarez on how to smooth the homework waters in your house:

1 Reduce stress by setting a non-negotiable homework time around their after-school schedules.

2 Work with your child to set up a calendar showing everything that's due over the course of the week or month and plan homework schedules accordingly.

3 Help your kids get organized: Set up the space, have all the materials they need on hand, and remind them to put finished work in the knapsack so it's not forgotten in the morning.

4 Remember to remain calm. Things get heated quickly if a child is having difficulty and you are struggling to make things clear. Have patience and look for different ways of explaining the situation.

5 Encourage your child to take short breaks when they get stuck on something.

6 If kids are struggling to stay focused, try turning it into a game. Use a timer and challenge them to see how much they can get done in five or 10 minutes.

7 It's important to encourage them to try to make some effort before you pitch in and help. Read instructions and get them to articulate what they need to do first before you walk away.

8 Resist taking over the assignment. You want it to be a true reflection of your child's ability. Teachers know when they are getting a parent's work — the quality is very different.

9 If your child just isn't understanding a subject, send a note back to the teacher explaining the difficulty so you can work together to help your child through the challenging tasks.

10 Praise is important. Make sure your child knows they have done a good job when they complete their work to the best of their ability. Keep it positive as they go off to bed to set them up for success the next day.

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Ichiro Suzuki of the Yankees acknowledges the crowd after hitting a single for his 4,000th career hit between Japan and the major leagues during a game against the Blue Jays on Wednesday in New York. FRANK FRANKLIN II/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ichiro slashes way to 4,000-hit plateau

Milestone man. With his single against Jays, Japanese player also broke tie with Gehrig

Ichiro Suzuki slashed a single the opposite way with his unique swing for the 4,000th hit of a career split between Japan and the major leagues.

The 39-year-old Suzuki hit a liner off Toronto's R.A. Dickey that bounced just beyond diving third baseman Brett Lawrie in the first inning Wednesday night for the milestone hit.

Suzuki broke a tie with Lou Gehrig when he got his 2,722nd major-league hit in his 13th season. The speedy outfielder amassed 1,278 hits in nine seasons with Orix of Japan's Pacific League.

Suzuki's Yankees teammates streamed out of the dugout and surrounded him at first base, Curtis Granderson giving him the first hug. A grinning Suzuki then faced the cheering fans and bowed.

When he went to his position in right field for the second inning, Suzuki tipped his cap to the fans who greeted him with a standing ovation.

Ken Griffey Jr., a former teammate with the Seattle Mariners, congratulated Suzuki with a message shown on the video board at Yankee Stadium.

The Mariners tweeted a statement: "Ichiro's historic milestone is testament to his position as one of the greatest hitters in the game of baseball."

Pete Rose with 4,256 hits and Ty Cobb with 4,191 are the only two players that have reached the number solely in the major leagues.

According to STATS, Suzuki has the most hits through the first 13 seasons of a big-league career. Paul Waner is second. He had 2,648 for Pittsburgh from 1926-38.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Soriano provides heroics

Jays' woes in N.Y.C. linger

Alfonso Soriano hit a tiebreaking two-run homer with two outs in the eighth inning and the Yankees handed the Toronto Blue Jays their 12th straight loss in New York, 4-2 on Wednesday night.

David Huff pitched one-hit ball in five innings of relief to shut down the Blue Jays before New York finally got to Toronto's R.A. Dickey.

Tiger Woods

Soft bed blamed for rough morning

Another week, another nagging injury for Tiger Woods — this time from a soft bed in his hotel.

Woods did not play the back nine of his pro-am Wednesday at the Barclays. He still walked with his amateur partners, but only chipped and putted at Liberty National.

He says his neck and back were stiff in the morning. He attributes it to a soft bed in his hotel and says he didn't want to push it.

Woods was seen grabbing his back in the final round of the PGA Championship. He had an elbow injury that troubled him for two months this summer.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Tennis

Sharapova pulls out of U.S. Open

Maria Sharapova withdrew from the U.S. Open on Wednesday because of a right shoulder injury.

Sharapova has played only one match on tour since her second-round loss at Wimbledon in June. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

London calling

"It's my homeland, and if they say, 'We need your help,' I'm going to consider that."

John Herdman says he's happy as head coach of the Canadian women's soccer team, but he would listen if approached about taking the vacant England job.

Carter slams pitcher's offering of innocence

Joe Carter isn't buying Ryan Dempster's claim that he didn't intend to hit Alex Rodriguez. GETTY IMAGES FILE

Former Toronto Blue Jays great Joe Carter rejects Ryan Dempster's claim that he didn't intentionally hit troubled Yankees slugger Alex Rodriguez with a pitch last weekend, saying the Red Sox right-hander's message was "loud and clear."

Dempster received a five-game suspension Tuesday for hitting Rodriguez with a pitch in a game Sunday. The native of Gibsons, B.C., maintains he wasn't trying to intentionally hit Rodriguez, who has drawn the wrath of his peers for appealing a 211-game suspension for violating baseball's drug and labour agreement.

But Carter isn't buying it.

"The message was loud and clear," Carter said. "I don't agree with what transpired, because if you're going to throw at someone like that just as a statement, you do it the first pitch, and then you go on about the rest of the game."

Dempster threw one pitch behind A-Rod's knees and two more inside during the second inning. Then his 3-0 pitch struck Rodriguez's left elbow pad and ricocheted off his back.

Carter chalked Dempster's actions up to the unwritten "codes" that players use to police themselves. But the ex-Jay tacitly endorsed the beaning.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quoted

"It's taken away from the guys who played it the right way."

Joe Carter contends drug cheats have created an uneven playing field

Horoscopes

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
You don't usually pay much attention to details but you will need to as of today. The Sun's change of sign warns it may be costly if you don't. Whatever you are working on, get the small stuff right first.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
A dynamic phase begins for you today and you must take full advantage of it. Don't be suspicious if people you hardly know praise you to the skies and offer to do you favours.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
It may be a pain having to explain yourself every step of the way but it will be worth it in the long-term. The planets make it easy to get close to people who mean a lot to you.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
Social activities are high on your agenda now and you must make time to have fun, no matter how much work you have got lined up. Don't worry too much about "serious" issues — they're really not that serious at all.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
The Sun leaves your birth sign today but you must not slow down or set your sights any lower. The next few weeks will bring new financial opportunities, be ready to act decisively.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
The Sun moves into your birth sign today and a new solar year gets under way, but don't think you have to start at a mad rush and try to get everything done at once.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
You have not seen as much of a friend as you would have liked but your paths are destined to cross again over the next few weeks. Why not give them a call and reconnect today?

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
If you need to talk to an authority figure, approach them today while you feel super confident. The planets indicate they will listen to what you have to say and act in your favour.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
As the Sun crosses the career angle of your chart today. you must be more ambitious. The next few weeks will be crucial for those Sags who want to get on in the world. Success is closer now than ever before.

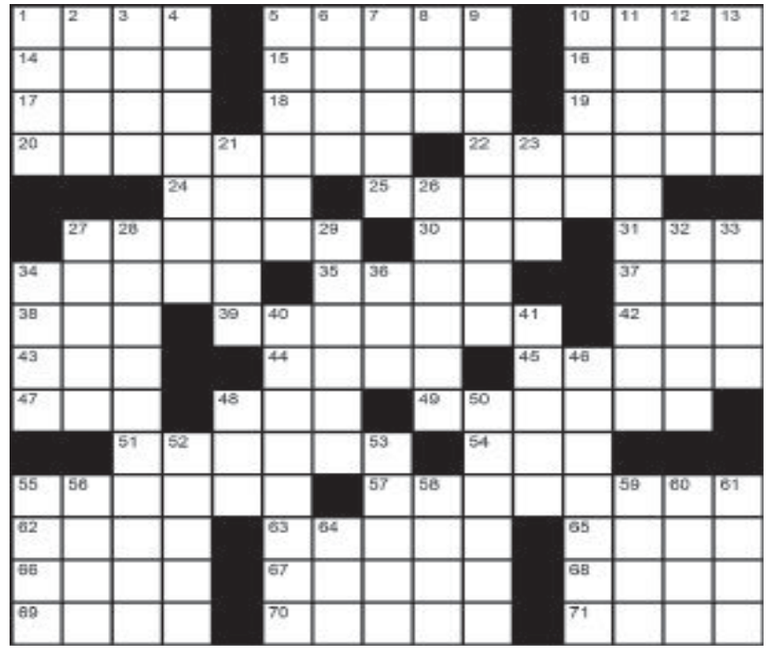
♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
As the Sun moves in your favour today, you won't be in the least bit fazed by the challenges that fate throws at you. On the contrary, you can't wait to get stuck into them, such is your supreme self-belief.

♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
There is nothing to fear but fear itself. With the Sun moving into one of the more sensitive areas of your chart you may need to repeat that mantra at regular intervals. Try not to worry.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
Cosmic activity in your opposite sign of Virgo means you are will clash with someone over the next few days. Just because you see life from different angles does not mean you cannot get along. **SALLY BROMPTON**

Crossword: Canada Across and Down

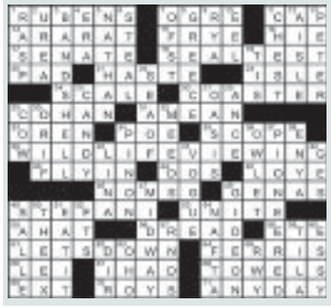
See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers.
BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



Across
1. __ Kong
5. Not qualified
10. Some aircrafts
14. Downright nasty
15. __ prosequi (Not proceeding, in law)
16. Czech river
17. Ms. Dunham of HBO's "Girls"
18. Fancy instrument
19. City's air pollution
20. Provincial leaders
22. False
24. 'Pepper' add-on (Pizza topping)
25. NYC's __ Island
27. Regatta crafts
30. Humour style
31. Disney song: "Zip-a-Dee-Doo-__"
34. __ and fauna
35. "Not on _ __!" = "No way!"
37. Rambo portrayer, to pals
38. Pants split
39. Saskatchewan's provincial fish
42. Pourboire
43. Gremlin
44. Fool
45. "I Started _ __" by The Bee Gees
47. Last letter, USA-style
48. Inclined
49. Hamilton-born star Mr. Levy
51. House painter's tool
54. Apiece
55. Steamed in corn husks dish
57. Guess Who's "__ Woman"
62. Drop
63. Reserved
65. Detective's find
66. Voice characteristic
67. Nymph of Greek mythology
68. Answer-needer's aid
69. Barely manages, __ out
70. Bird-created structures
71. Chooses

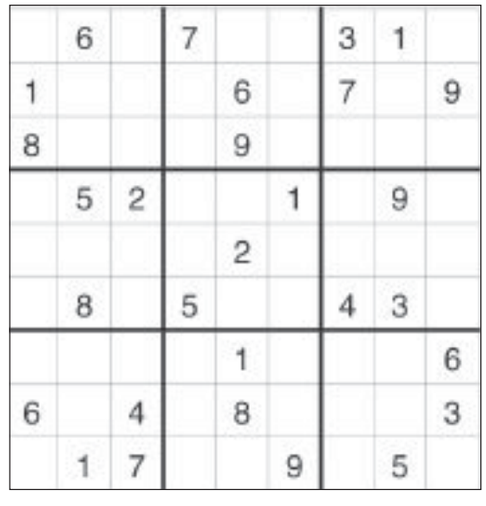
Down
1. Self-__ book
2. Finito
3. "The Whole __ Yards" (2000)
4. Fashion magazine
5. Reveal, as a portrait painting
6. Pinot __ (Wine variety)
7. Dental string
8. Misguided = __-conceived
9. "Heaven Coming Down" band from Windsor, The __ __
10. Canadian figure skating great Ms. Chouinard
11. New Brunswick city
12. Step heavily
13. Palm starch
21. Relative by marriage
23. Pig's pen
26. Pluck eyebrows
27. Mucky matter
28. It flows in NWT and Nunavut, __ River
29. Military greeting
32. Similar
33. Ballyhoo
34. Animator Mr. Freleng
36. Deli request
40. Singing sisters from Canada, Natalie or Nicole
41. Enthusiastic
46. Wrestler/rocker from Winnipeg, Chris __
48. "Never Ever" by __ Saints (Group #40-Down were in)
50. Overturns
52. Hall & __
53. Does garden work
55. Carry
56. "Star Trek" episode, __ Time
58. Vegan's taboo
59. Cut short
60. Uncle's wife
61. Profits
64. "__ you kidding?"

Yesterday's Crossword



Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.



Yesterday's Sudoku

7	1	6	8	6	4	3	2	9
3	2	4	9	1	5	8	7	6
8	9	6	2	7	3	4	5	1
5	3	8	4	2	1	6	9	7
2	6	1	7	3	9	5	8	4
9	4	7	5	8	6	2	1	3
6	7	3	1	5	2	9	4	8
4	8	2	6	9	7	1	3	5
1	5	9	3	4	8	7	6	2

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